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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE HOSPITAL ACQUIRED INFECTIONS: IMPORTANCE, IMPLEMENTATIONS AND CHALLENGES

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Statement of the Problem: Hospital-acquired infections (nosocomial infections) pose a serious risk to the safety of patients and hospital staff. The main aim of this study was to examine the effect of programs and strategies that implemented in health care settings to prevent and reduce nosocomial infections, especially in intensive care units.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: This in-depth qualitative study was undertaken at the Medical Intensive Care Unit MICU (16 beds) in a large Jordanian teaching hospital. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three members of the infection control team, head of the infection control committee at the hospital, three staff from the sterilization unit, and eight registered nurses from the MICU. Interview transcripts were coded and analyzed thematically.

Findings: We identified 5 key themes: 1) Infection prevention and control policies and plans (there is written and informed polices, staff must be oriented and trained on the policies and procedures, staff should be qualified scientifically and practically, and they should be aware of their responsibilities in surveillance). 2) Dealing with standard precautions: a) all staff should follow the following practices: hand hygiene; use of gloves, gown, mask, eye protection, or face shield; b) applying safe injection practices; c) sterilizing instruments, equipment, and devices; and d) monitoring of these practices. 3) Using care bundles, informants mentioned that the MICU staff has been implementing care bundles for (urinary catheters, central lines, ventilators, and invasive devices). 4) implementing restrict procedures for controlling and monitoring the incidence of the most common types of infections (blood stream infection, urinary tract infection, and pneumonia); 5) Challenges in implementing infection control policies and procedures (practices of some family members and visitors, staff turnover, and overloading of patients).

Conclusion & Significance: This study highlighted the impact of policies and procedures on how to monitor and control the Hospital Acquired Infection, where these policies standardize the behavior of staff and eliminate the differences in medical practices. However, the effectiveness of these policies is highly dependent on the awareness and commitment of hospital staff and other careers.